under examination. In addition, tightening of the control of the supervisory staff at higher levels in the running of these offices is also emphasized.

Steps to Fight Drought

116. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the amount of financial assistance asked for by different State Governments to fight drought situation in their States;

(b) what is the amount sanctioned by the Central Government in each case so far; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to fight drought in these States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) The State Governments of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh sought following financial assistance for meeting the drought situation.

(Rs. in crores)

S.No.	States	Assistance sought
1	Maharashtra	14·91
2	Karnataka	10·00
3	Himachal Pradesh	20·00

Under the existing scheme for financing the relief expenditure, a Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) has been constituted for each State with an allocated amount, of which 75 per cent is contributed by the Central Government in four quarterly instalments and 25 per cent is contributed by the State Governments from their own resources. With the creation of the Calamity Relief Fund it is now for the State Governments to meet the entire expenditure on management of natural calamities. Additional Central assistance can be extended only in the case of a situation of rare severity which requires handling at national level. The situation in these States was not of rare severity.

(c) Execution of relief operation in the wake of natural calamities is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments. These State Governments are taking necessary steps to provide necessary relief to the affected people.

Education as a Fundamental Right

117. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to make education a fundamental right with a view to make free and compulsory education available upto the age of 15;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS) WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT) (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) It is already an accepted policy of the Government, in accordance with Article 45 of the Constitution, that all children should get free and compulsory education till they complete 14 years of age. Government is making requisite endeavour to provide